



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## **QuickBites Tip**

### **Fact or Fiction**

**It doesn't matter where my fat is located on my body. All body fat is equally detrimental to my health.**

#### **\*FICTION**

All body fat is not created equal. Experts agree that the right amount of body fat is important and essential for good health. However, we have two main locations for body fat storage: visceral and subcutaneous. The location of our fat stores is an important factor in determining our level of risk for developing diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, gallbladder problems and certain cancers.

Visceral body fat is stored deep in the abdominal cavity and attaches to internal organs including the heart and liver. It is often referred to as the "beer belly" or "apple shape". This is the more deadly form of body fat. The good news is that because it is more metabolically active than subcutaneous body fat, the hormones released during exercise work to more quickly break down visceral fat and use it for energy.

Subcutaneous body fat is important and necessary for good health as it insulates to protect us from temperature changes, maintains our hormone balance, cushions our internal organs, provides us with energy, and stores our fat soluble vitamins until needed. Subcutaneous fat is concentrated in the hips and thighs, is softer and more easily pinched, and is often referred to as "love handles" or the "pear shape". An excessive amount of subcutaneous fat can increase our risk for many diseases. Unfortunately, it is less metabolically active than visceral fat and is harder to burn off.

When determining your health risk associated with body fat, be sure to include your waist circumference in the evaluation.

Regular cardiovascular and strength training exercises combined with a consistent, healthy diet is our best weapon in the "battle with the bulge."

#### **Want to learn more?**

**Sign up for Personal Nutrition Training with Curwin Gett, MA RDN LD  
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